BRIAN AZZARELLO
LEE BERMEJO
LEX LUTHOR
MAN OF STEEL
NO. 4
OF 5
AUG '05
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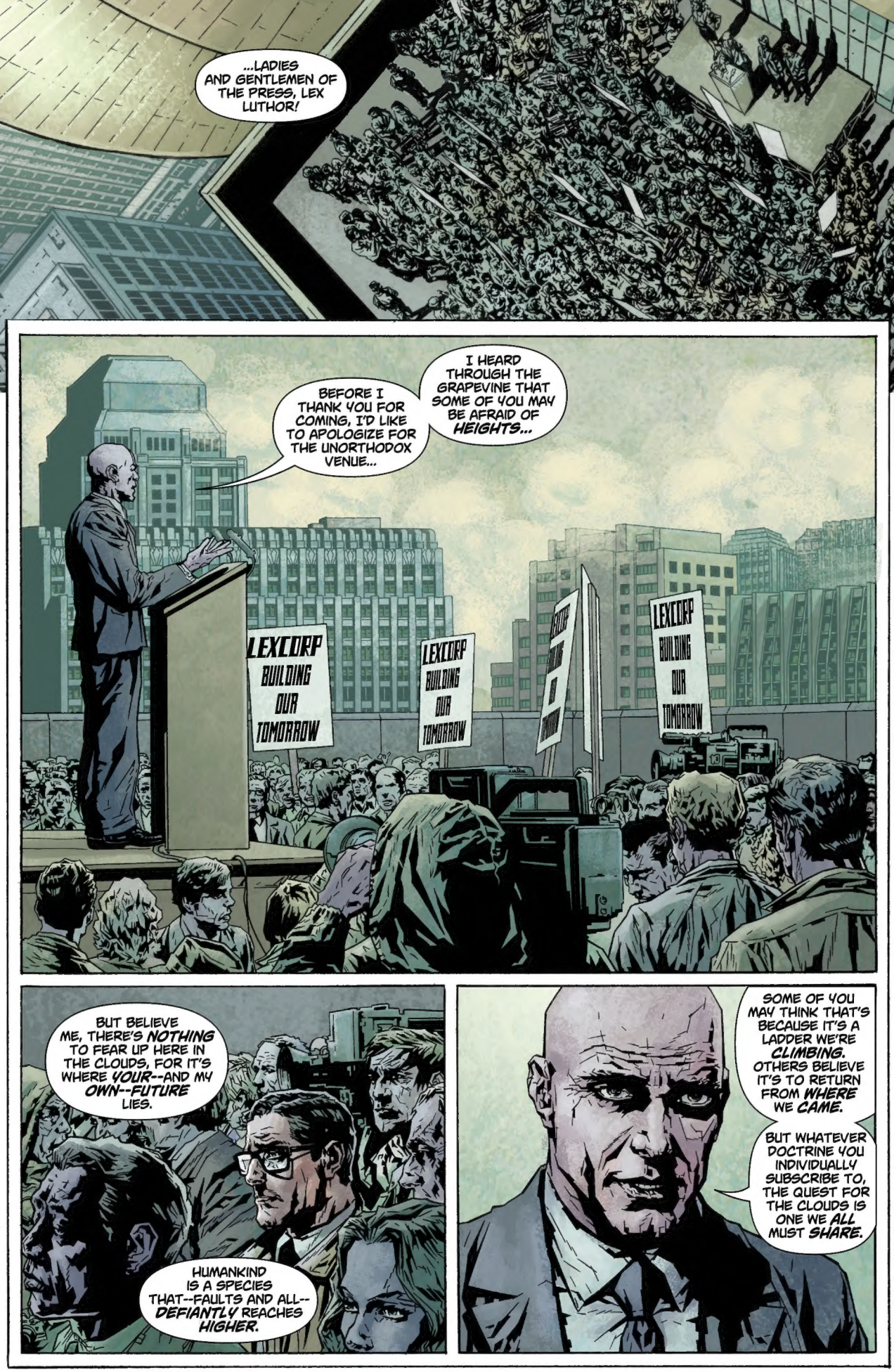

...LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS, LEX LUTHOR!
I HEARD THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT SOME OF YOU MAY BE AFRAID OF HEIGHTS...
BEFORE I THANK YOU FOR COMING, I'D LIKE TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE UNORTHODOX VENUE...
LEXCORP BUILDING OUR TOMORROW
LEXCORP BUILDING OUR TOMORROW
LEXCORP BUILDING OUR TOMORROW
BUT BELIEVE ME, THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR UP HERE IN THE CLOUDS, FOR IT'S WHERE YOUR--AND MY OWN--FUTURE LIES.
HUMANKIND IS A SPECIES THAT--FAULTS AND ALL--DEFIANTLY REACHES HIGHER.
SOME OF YOU MAY THINK THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S A LADDER WE'RE CLIMBING. OTHERS BELIEVE IT'S TO RETURN FROM WHERE WE CAME.
BUT WHATEVER DOCTRINE YOU INDIVIDUALLY SUBSCRIBE TO, THE QUEST FOR THE CLOUDS IS ONE WE ALL MUST SHARE.

ALL OF US. EVERY MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD--WE MUST STRIVE TO MAKE TODAY BETTER THAN YESTERDAY...
AND TOMORROW BETTER THAN ALL OF US.
THAT'S WHY I BUILT THIS SCIENCE SPIRE. I CONSIDER IT A RECORD OF WHAT WE AS A PEOPLE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED, AND OF WHAT'S YET TO COME.
EVERY FLOOR IS DEDICATED TO OUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS. FROM PICKING UP A BONE, TO...
WHO KNOWS? BECAUSE WE ARE NOT DONE. AND THIS BUILDING WON'T BE EITHER. THE TOP FLOORS WILL BE LEFT AS YOU SEE THEM NOW...
...WAITING, FOR YOU, TO FINISH THEM.

I NEED SOMEONE FROM AMONG YOU TO RAISE THE SPIRE, WHICH IS ONLY A FOUNDATION.
I BELIEVE, IN MY HEART, THAT YOU WILL. I BELIEVE IN HUMANITY. AND I BELIEVE THAT I AM EXACTLY LIKE YOU.
I BELIEVE THAT WE MUST CONTROL OUR OWN DESTINY.
I BELIEVE IN A HIGHER POWER.
I BELIEVE THAT WE NEED A BOOST FROM EACH OTHER TO REACH THE CLOUDS.
I BELIEVE THAT'S WHY I WAS PUT ON THIS EARTH. AND I BELIEVE THAT LEXCORP GIVES YOU...

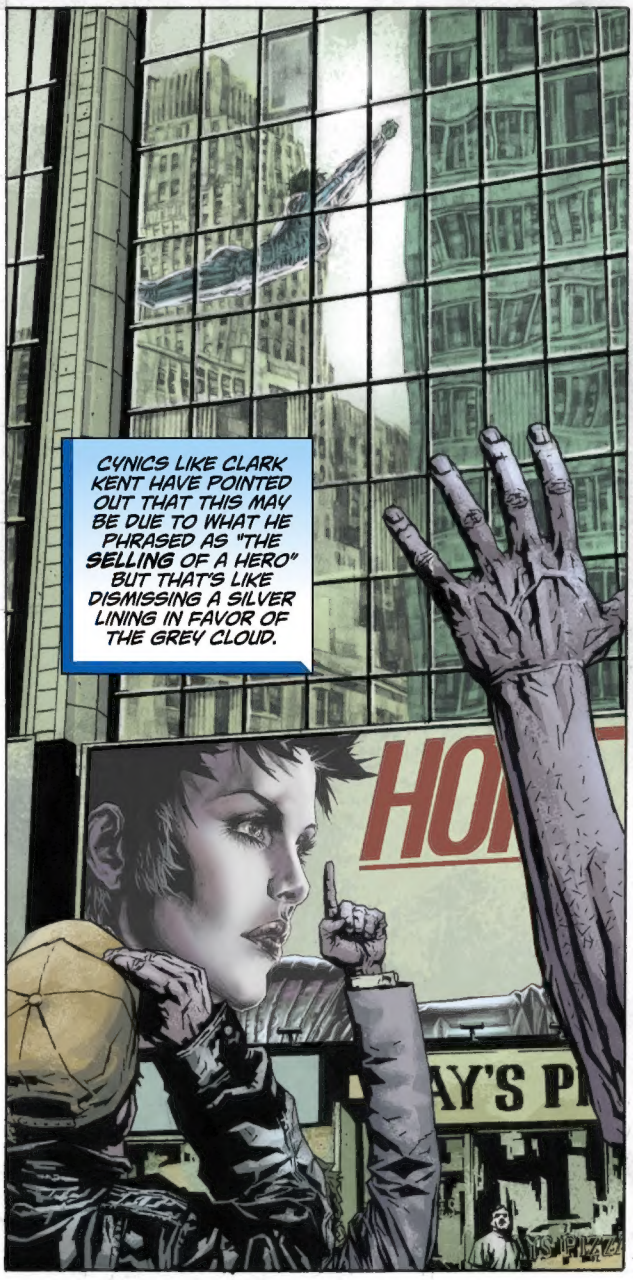
Lex Luthor: Man of Steel

SUPERMAN *created by* JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

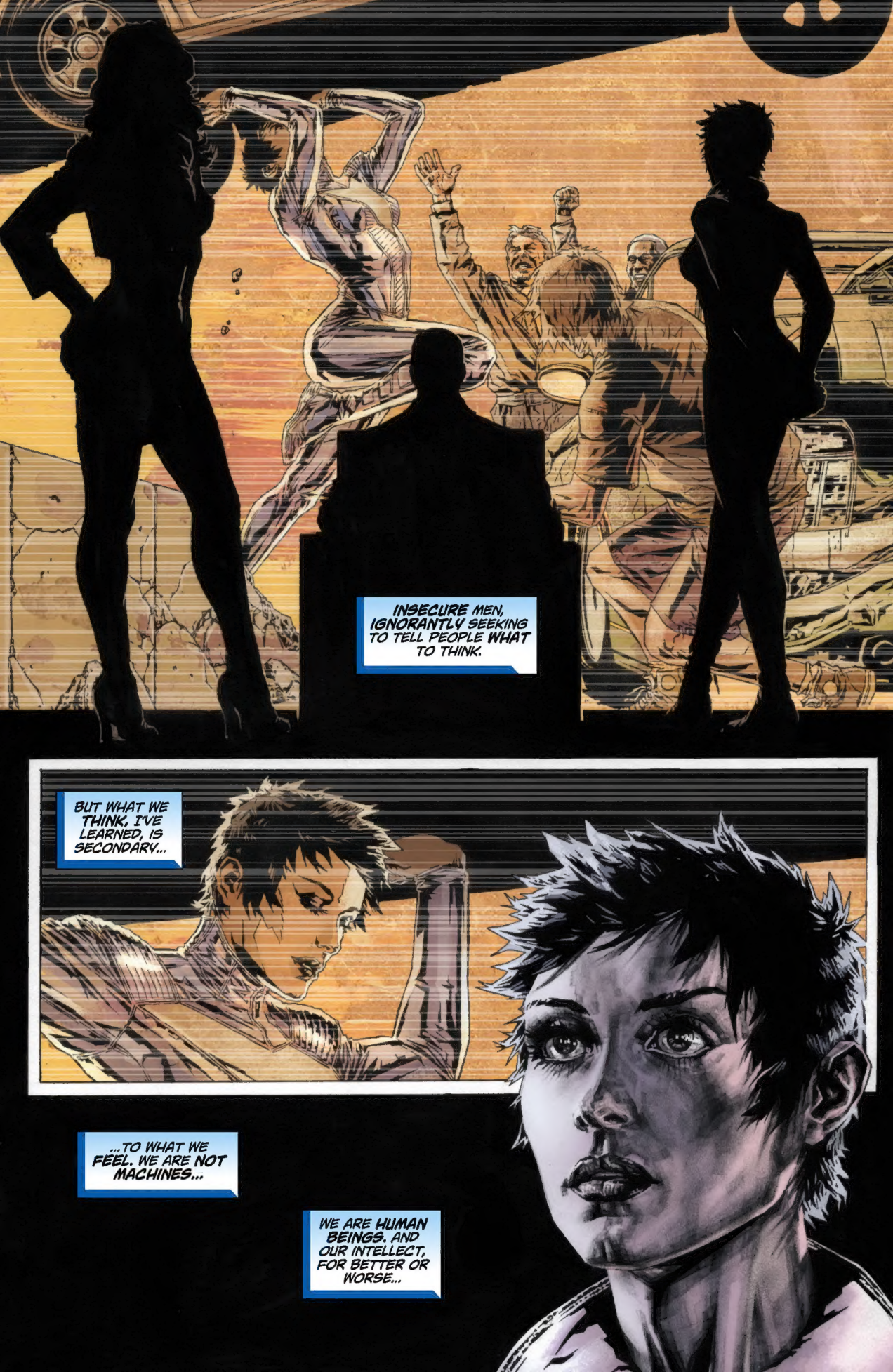
BRIAN AZZARELLO - *WRITER* LEE BERMEJO - *PENCILS & INKS* MICK GRAY - *INKS*

DAVE STEWART *COLORIST* PAT BROSSEAU *LETTERER* CASEY SEIJAS *ASST. EDITOR* WILL DENNIS *EDITOR*

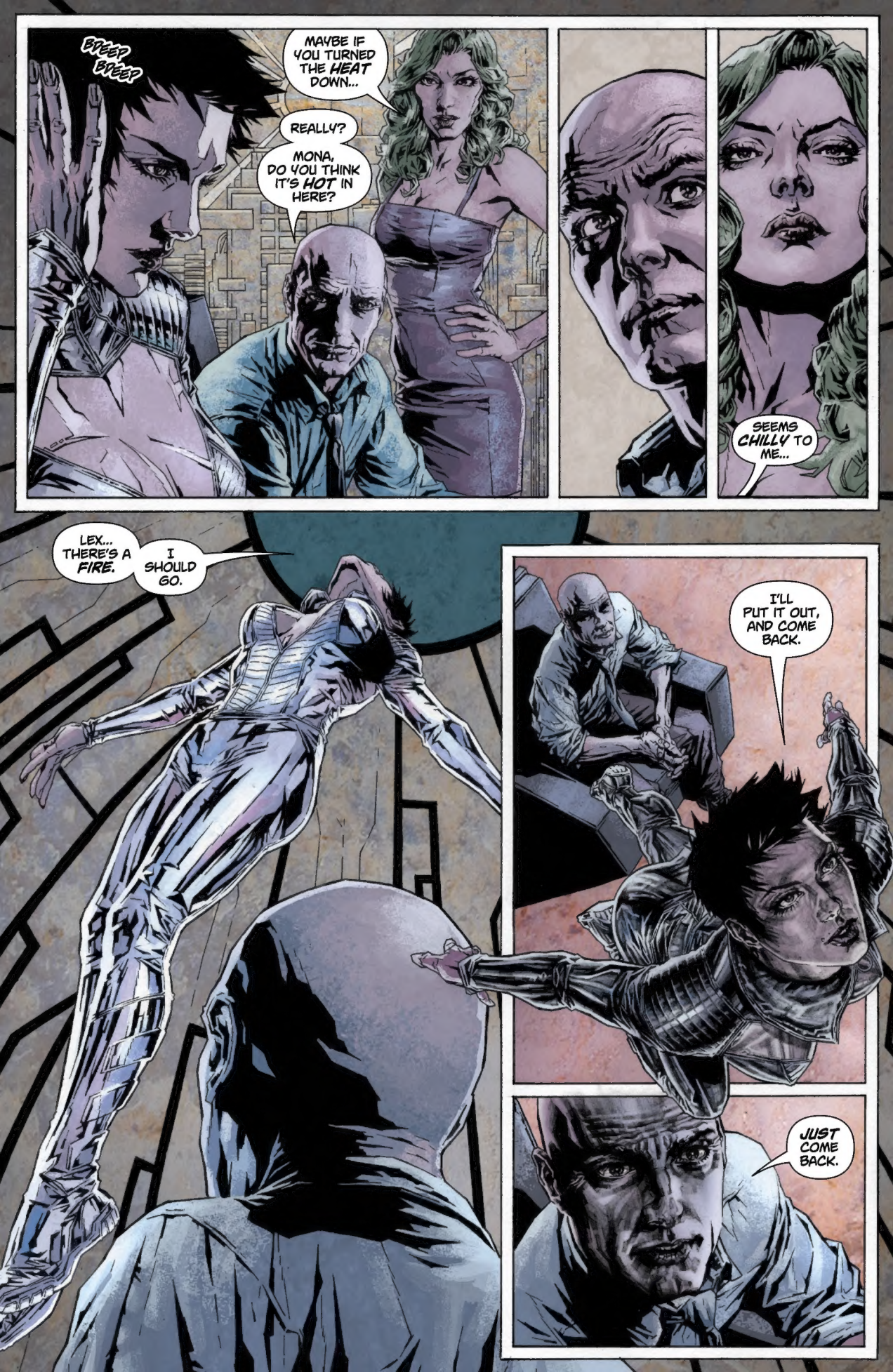
HOPE
IT'S BEEN NEARLY A MONTH SINCE HER DEBUT, BUT IN THAT SHORT SPAN SHE'S CAPTURED NOT JUST THE IMAGINATION, BUT THE HEART OF METROPOLIS.

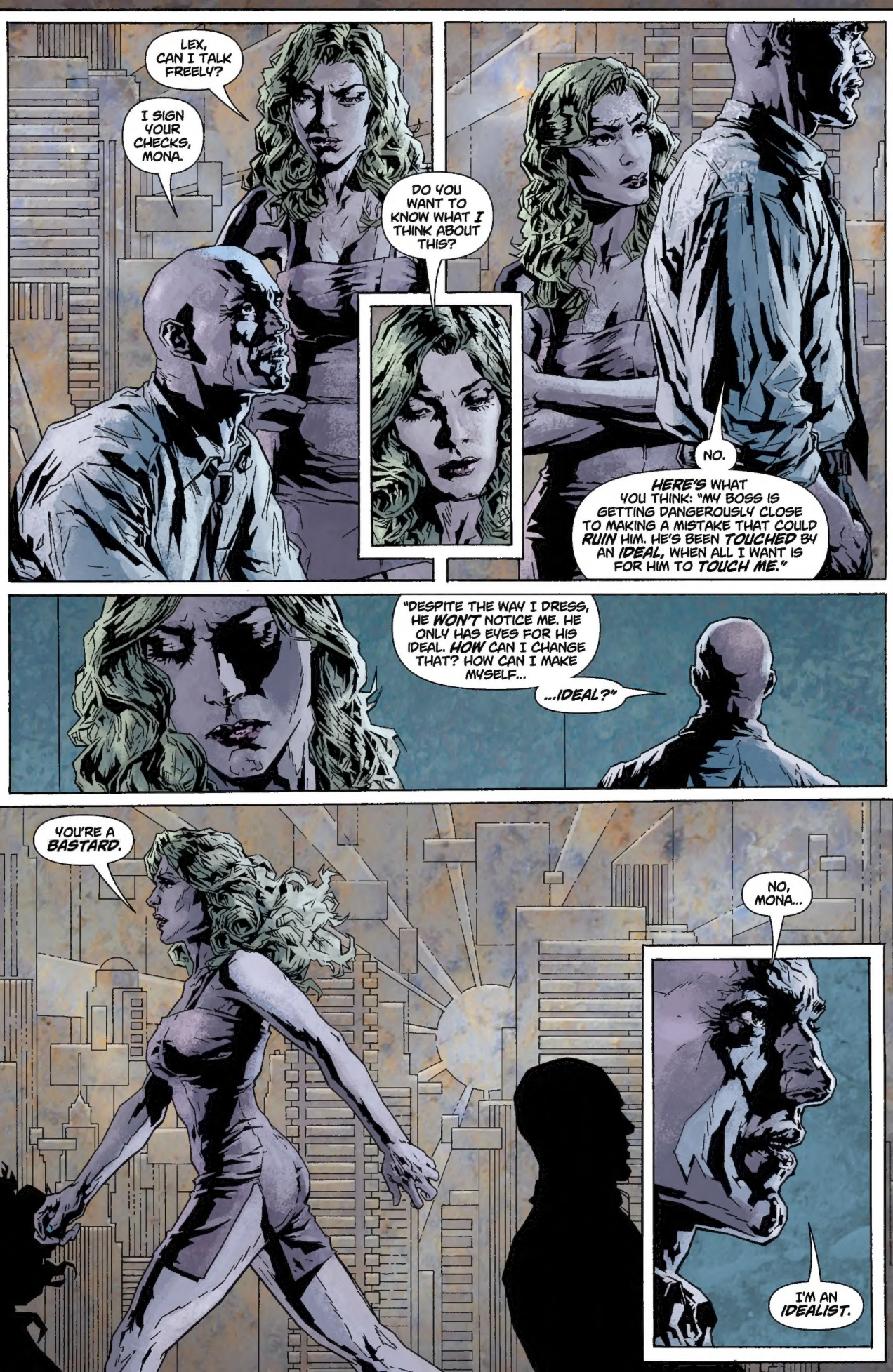

CYNICS LIKE CLARK KENT HAVE POINTED OUT THAT THIS MAY BE DUE TO WHAT HE PHRASED AS "THE SELLING OF A HERO" BUT THAT'S LIKE DISMISSING A SILVER LINING IN FAVOR OF THE GREY CLOUD.

MAYBE I SHOULD BUY THE DAILY PLANET AND FIRE HIM. CERTAINLY THERE ARE OTHERS IN MY POSITION THAT CONTROL THE MEDIA.


INSECURE MEN, IGNORANTLY SEEKING TO TELL PEOPLE WHAT TO THINK.
BUT WHAT WE THINK, I'VE LEARNED, IS SECONDARY...
...TO WHAT WE FEEL. WE ARE NOT MACHINES...
WE ARE HUMAN BEINGS. AND OUR INTELLECT, FOR BETTER OR WORSE...

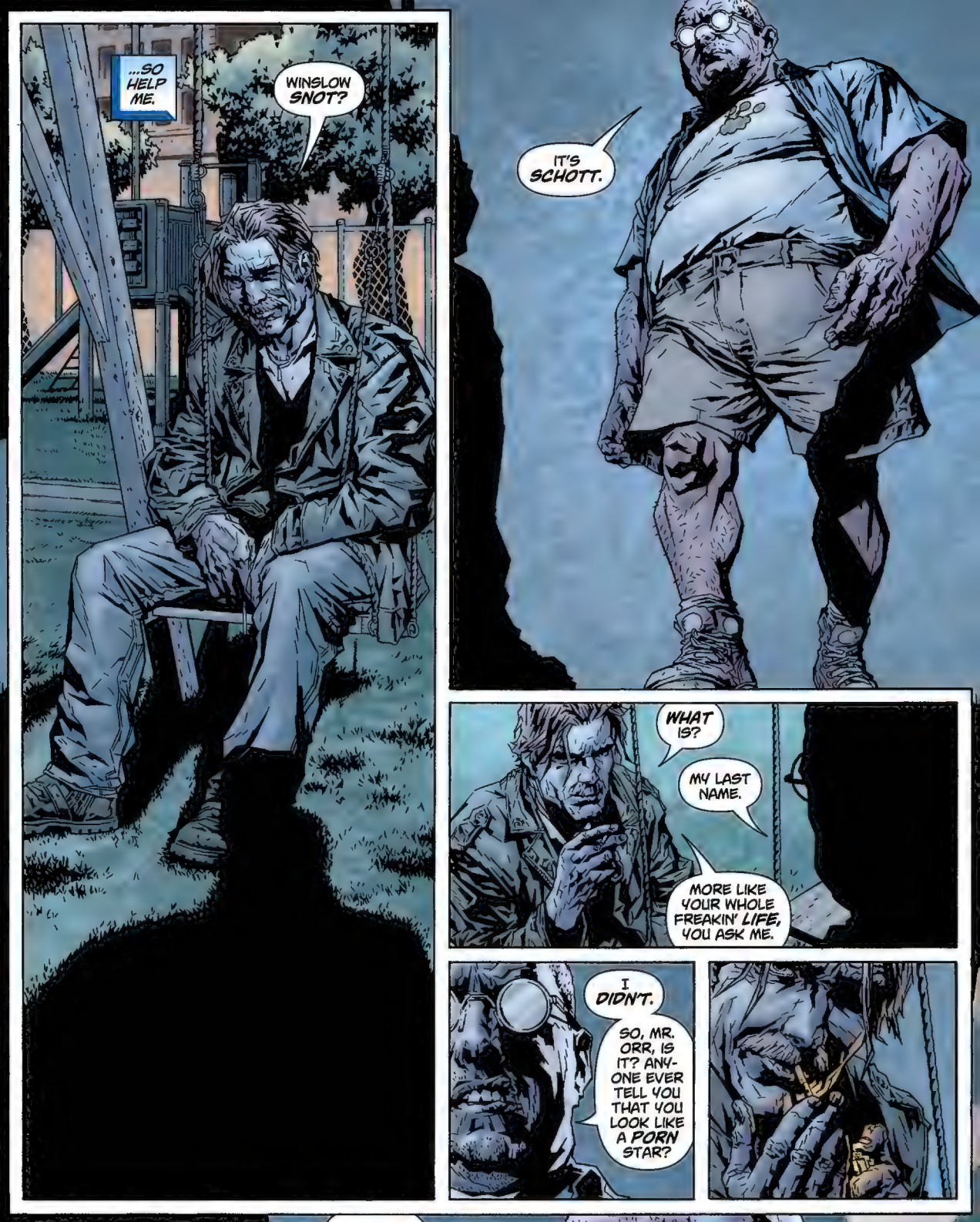
...IS SLAVE TO OUR EMOTIONS.
I'M PROUD OF YOU, HOPE...
CLIC
...VERY PROUD.
YOU'RE MORE THAN I DREAMED YOU'D BE.
ARE YOU BLUSHING?
I'M... HAPPY I MAKE YOU FEEL THAT WAY.
HOW ELSE WOULD YOU THINK ME TO FEEL?
I WAS JUST A GIRL BEFORE...
YOU WERE NEVER JUST A GIRL.
YOU'RE BLUSHING AGAIN.


BPEEP BPEEP
MAYBE IF YOU TURNED THE HEAT DOWN...
REALLY?
MONA, DO YOU THINK IT'S HOT IN HERE?
SEEMS CHILLY TO ME...
LEX... THERE'S A FIRE.
I SHOULD GO.
I'LL PUT IT OUT, AND COME BACK.
JUST COME BACK.


LEX, CAN I TALK FREELY?
I SIGN YOUR CHECKS, MONA.
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT I THINK ABOUT THIS?
NO.
HERE'S WHAT YOU THINK: "MY BOSS IS GETTING DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO MAKING A MISTAKE THAT COULD RUIN HIM. HE'S BEEN TOUCHED BY AN IDEAL, WHEN ALL I WANT IS FOR HIM TO TOUCH ME."
"DESPITE THE WAY I DRESS, HE WON'T NOTICE ME. HE ONLY HAS EYES FOR HIS IDEAL. HOW CAN I CHANGE THAT? HOW CAN I MAKE MYSELF...
...IDEAL?"
YOU'RE A BASTARD.
NO, MONA...
I'M AN IDEALIST.

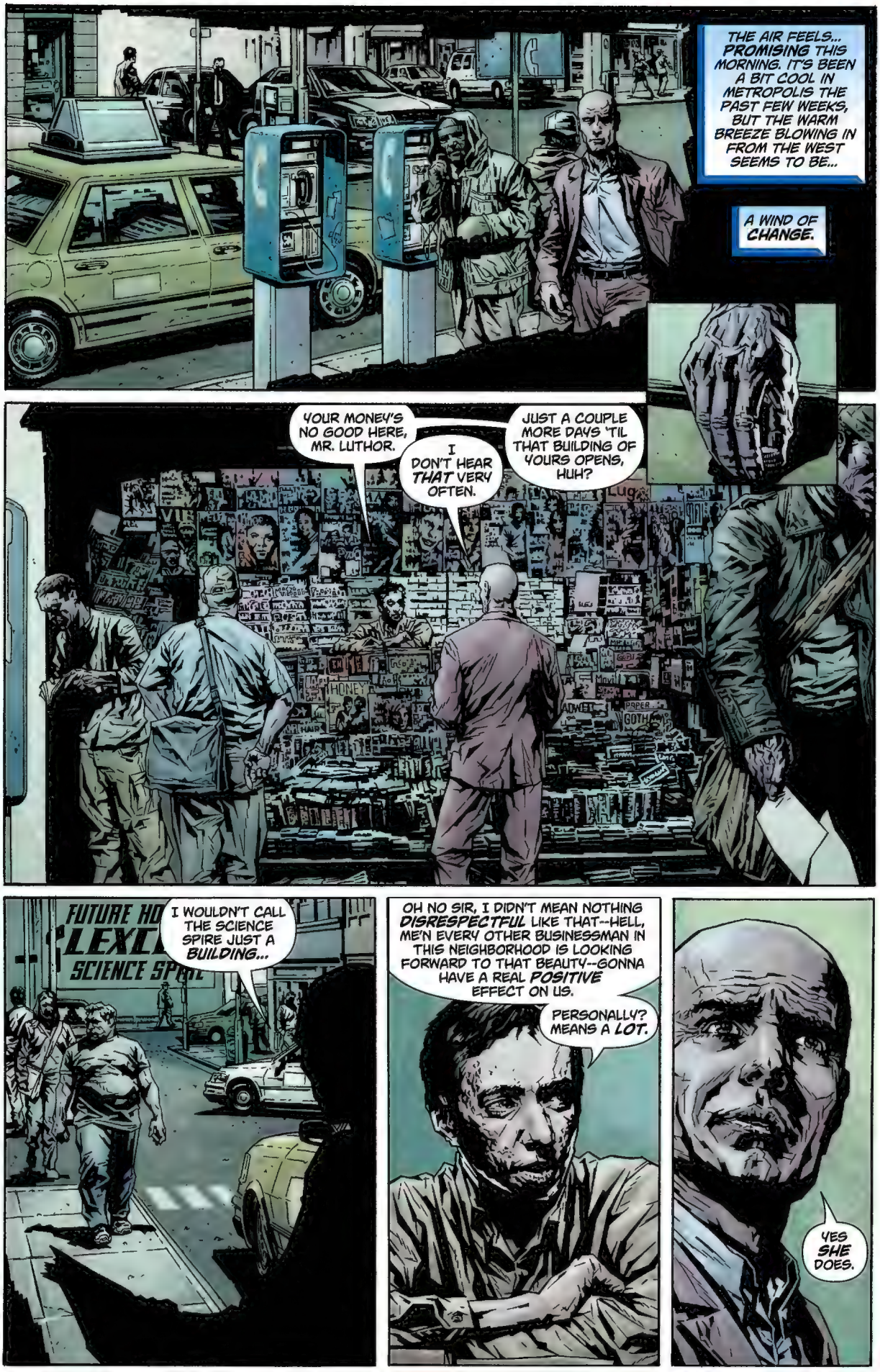
...HER Q-RATING IS THROUGH THE ROOF.
I MEAN, HOPE COULD SELL CONDOMS TO NUNS.
THERE'S A MARKET WE HAVEN'T PLUNGED INTO...
LEX, THE PUBLIC LOVES--AND I MEAN TO THE POINT OF DEVOTION--LOVES HER.
MY FAVORITE PLACE TO EAT? OH, YOU'RE GONNA HATE ME, BUT...
...PINEAPPLE KING.
PINEAPPLE KING? I LOVE THAT PLACE!!! THE CHILI-DOG--
WITH BROWN MUSTARD, BANANA PEPPERS AND ONIONS?
DON'T FORGET THE LEMONADE!
FORGET? MY FATHER TOOK ME WHEN I WAS FIVE AND I WAS HOOKED--THE BEST PLACE IN THE CITY!
WELL, DO ME A FAVOR--DON'T TAKE THE JUSTICE LEAGUE THERE WHEN THEY COME RECRUITING OR THE LINES WILL BE DOWN THE BLOCK!
OH, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT HAPPENING.
WRAPPED AROUND THE BLOCK!

NO, REGGIE, I MEAN ABOUT ME JOINING THE JUSTICE LEAGUE...
I'M A METROPOLIS GIRL--BORN AND RAISED...
THERE ARE PLENTY OF HEROES IN THIS COUNTRY, AND WE'RE ALL BLESSED TO HAVE THEM...
BUT MY HEART BELONGS TO THIS CITY. IT'S MY HOME-- IT'S OUR HOME...
...I WON'T EVER LEAVE HER.
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, HOPE...
METROPOLIS IS BLESSED TO HAVE YOU.
INDEED WE ARE.
THE SCIENCE SPIRE? IS EVERYTHING ON SCHEDULE?
YES SIR.
OPENING DAY IS SET FOR TWO WEEKS.
TWO WEEKS...
...A LIFETIME.


...SO HELP ME.
WINSLOW SNOT?
IT'S SCHOTT.
WHAT IS?
MY LAST NAME.
MORE LIKE YOUR WHOLE FREAKIN' LIFE, YOU ASK ME.
I DIDN'T.
SO, MR. ORR, IS IT? ANY-ONE EVER TELL YOU THAT YOU LOOK LIKE A PORN STAR?
NOT WHILE I HAD MY CLOTHES ON, NO.
AND, AREN'T A TAD OLD FOR WHAT FLOATS YOUR LITTLE TOY BOAT?

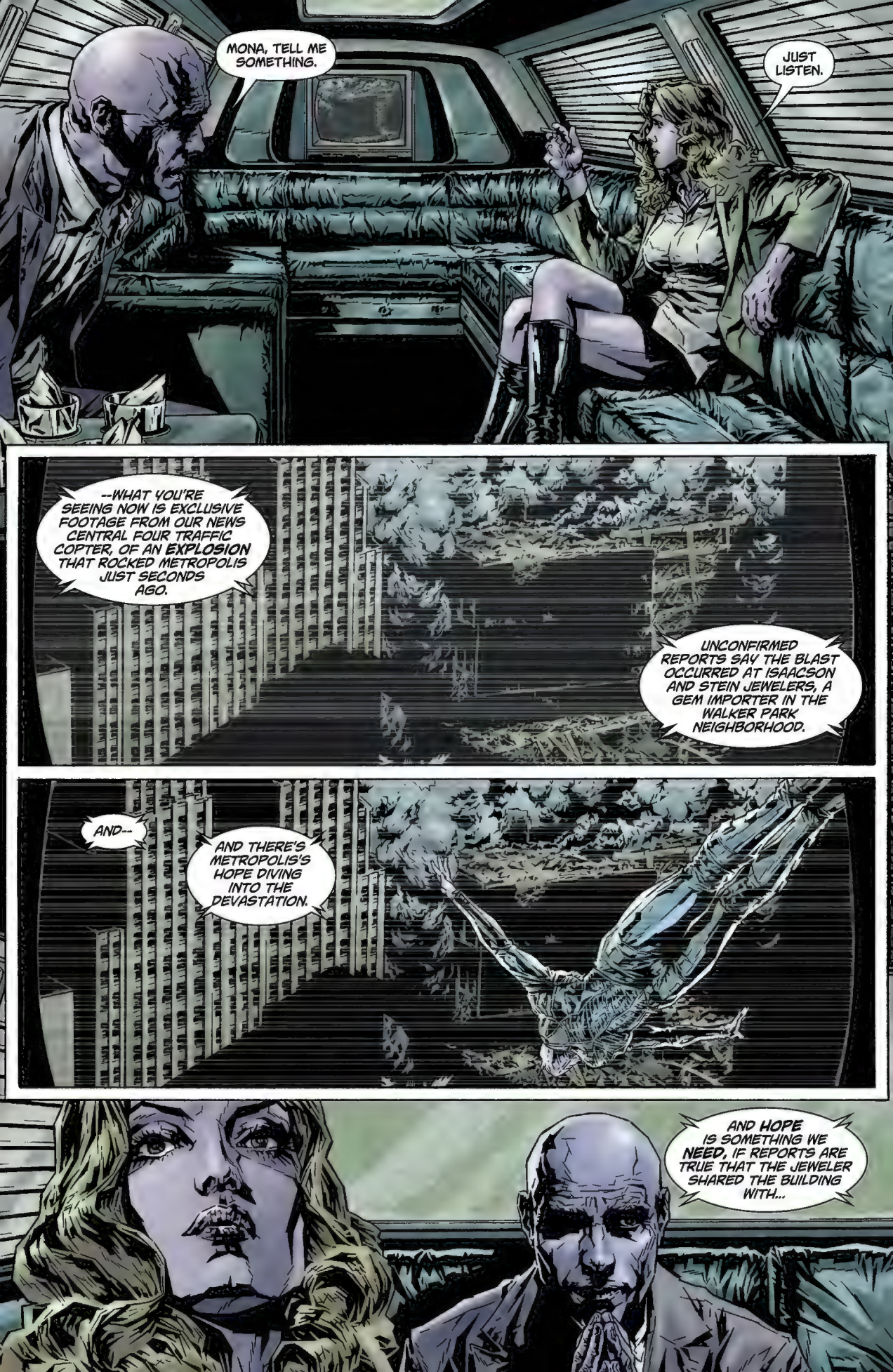
I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF. THAT'S IN THE PAST, THOUGH.
I'M... SEEING A COUNSELOR AND TAKING MEDICATION NOW.
C'MON WINSLOW, WE BOTH KNOW THAT'S...
S'NOT TRUE.
THERE'S BEEN SOME CUT-BACKS IN SOCIAL PROGRAMS.
EVEN NEEDED ONES.
WHAT'S THIS?
THE JOB I PROMISED.
I DIDN'T PROMISE I'D DO IT.
NO, BUT YOU JUST COULDN'T HELP YOURSELF COMING TO SEE WHAT IT IS.
INTERESTING.
THIS ALL CHECKS OUT?
EVERY SPARKLING BIT OF IT.
I'D NEED SOME UPFRONT--

--YOU GOT IT.
WHAT'S MY SHARE?
A GENEROUS THIRTY-FIVE.
MAKE IT A MORE GENEROUS FORTY.
NO.
GIVE ME A COUPLE DAYS. I'LL BE--
--I'LL SEE YOU, AFTER THE JOB. THE WHEN AND WHERE IS IN THE FILE.
HAVE FUN, MAN TOY.
IT'S TOYMAN.
BULL SCHOTT IT IS.


THE AIR FEELS... PROMISING THIS MORNING. IT'S BEEN A BIT COOL IN METROPOLIS THE PAST FEW WEEKS, BUT THE WARM BREEZE BLOWING IN FROM THE WEST SEEMS TO BE...
A WIND OF CHANGE.
YOUR MONEY'S NO GOOD HERE, MR. LUTHOR.
I DON'T HEAR THAT VERY OFTEN.
JUST A COUPLE MORE DAYS 'TIL THAT BUILDING OF YOURS OPENS, HUH?
I WOULDN'T CALL THE SCIENCE SPIRE JUST A BUILDING...
OH NO SIR, I DIDN'T MEAN NOTHING DISRESPECTFUL LIKE THAT--HELL, ME'N EVERY OTHER BUSINESSMAN IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT BEAUTY--GONNA HAVE A REAL POSITIVE EFFECT ON US.
PERSONALLY? MEANS A LOT.
YES SHE DOES.

DESPITE MY STANDING, I FEEL THE NEED TO WALK THIS CITY EVERY DAY TO KEEP MY FEET CONNECTED TO ITS GROUND.
HANDY DAIRY
I OWE IT THAT MUCH, MUCH LIKE THE OTHERS THAT WALK IT, OWE IT...
...TO ME.
BOOM
GARZ

9 AV.
JESUS...
OH MY GOD.
WALK
ONE WAY
MR. LUTHOR...
GET IN THE CAR, PLEASE.


MONA, TELL ME SOMETHING.
JUST LISTEN.
--WHAT YOU'RE SEEING NOW IS EXCLUSIVE FOOTAGE FROM OUR NEWS CENTRAL FOUR TRAFFIC COPTER, OF AN EXPLOSION THAT ROCKED METROPOLIS JUST SECONDS AGO.
UNCONFIRMED REPORTS SAY THE BLAST OCCURRED AT ISAACSON AND STEIN JEWELERS, A GEM IMPORTER IN THE WALKER PARK NEIGHBORHOOD.
AND--
AND THERE'S METROPOLIS'S HOPE DIVING INTO THE DEVASTATION.
AND HOPE IS SOMETHING WE NEED, IF REPORTS ARE TRUE THAT THE JEWELER SHARED THE BUILDING WITH...

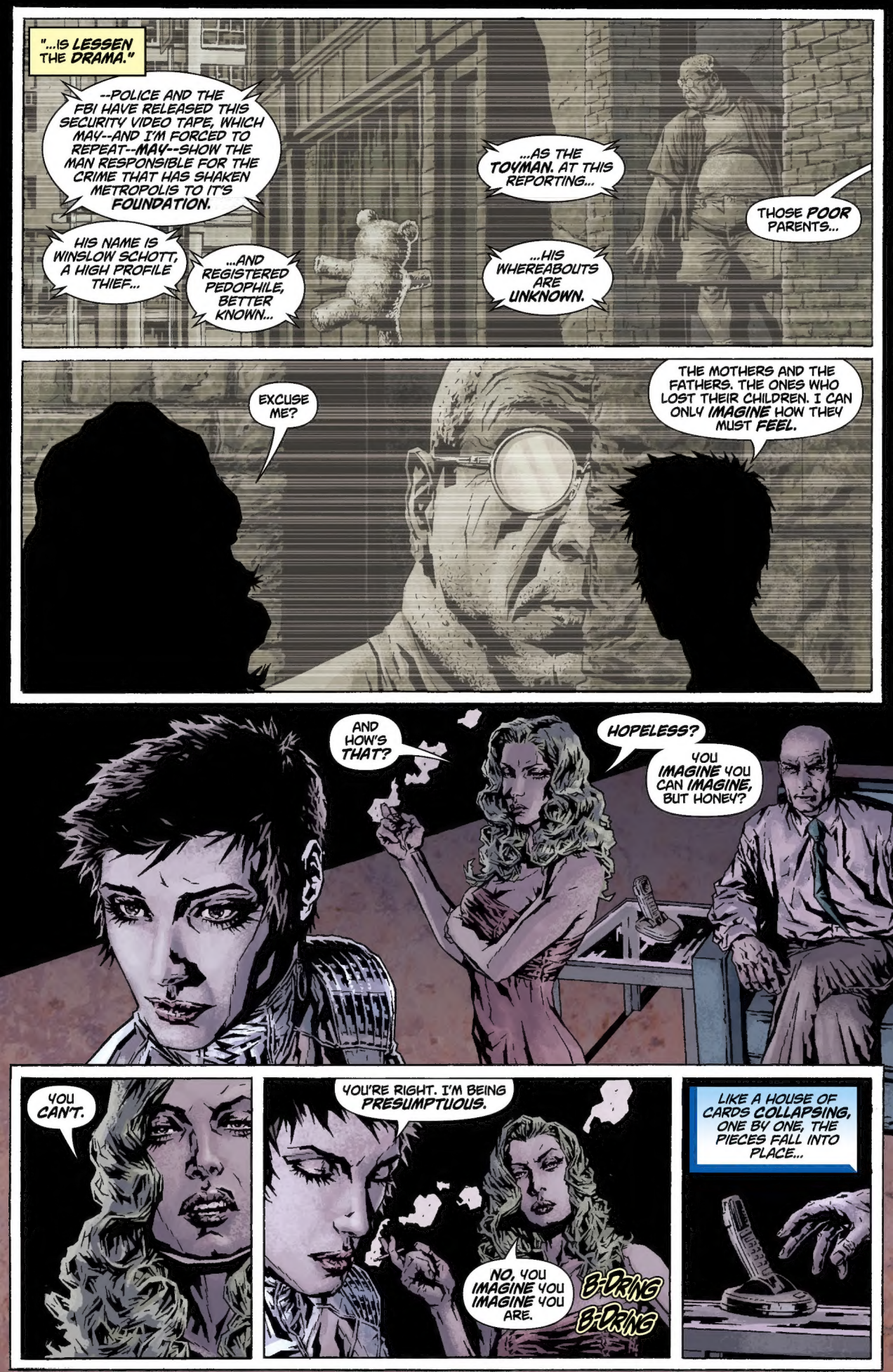
47-88
...A CHILDREN'S DAYCARE CENTER.

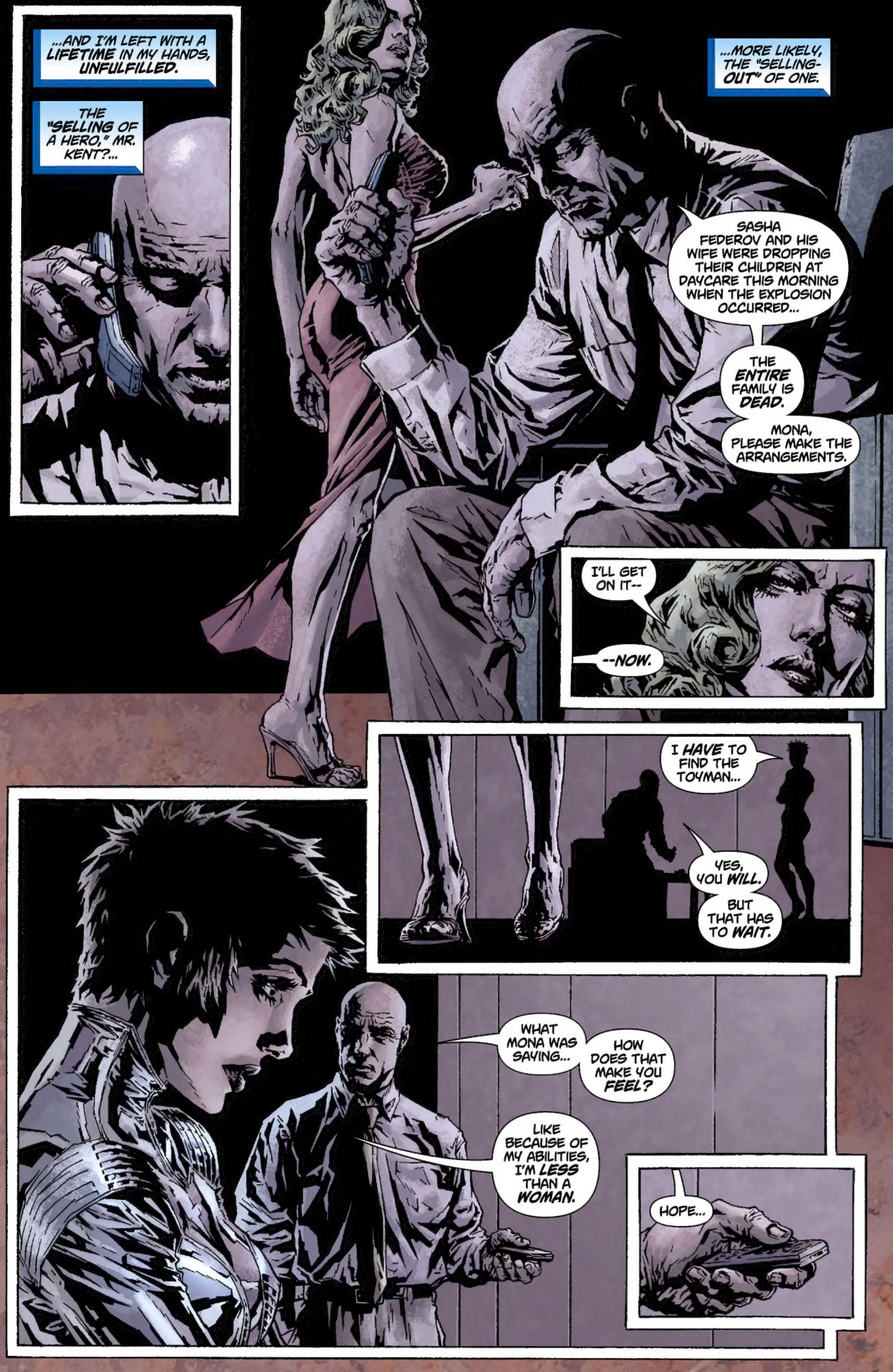
--THIS DRAMATIC FOOTAGE WAS SHOT EARLIER TODAY, FROM WHAT I CAN ONLY DESCRIBE AS HELL.
LIKE YOU'VE BEEN THERE...
GIMME ANOTHER.

YOU EVER SHOOT A TEDDY BEAR?
DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF OUR HEROES--AND I'M TALKING HERE OF THE ONES OUR TAXES SUPPORT--

TWENTY-SIX ADULTS--
AND AHEM-- SIXTY-EIGHT CHILDREN LOST THEIR LIVES.
LET'S NOT EVEN TALK ABOUT THE INJURED AT THIS POINT.

AMEN. INJURIES? THEY DON'T MAKE THE NEWS. ALL THEY DO...


"...IS LESSEN THE DRAMA."
--POLICE AND THE FBI HAVE RELEASED THIS SECURITY VIDEO TAPE, WHICH MAY--AND I'M FORCED TO REPEAT--MAY--SHOW THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CRIME THAT HAS SHAKEN METROPOLIS TO IT'S FOUNDATION.
HIS NAME IS WINSLOW SCHOTT, A HIGH PROFILE THIEF...
...AND REGISTERED PEDOPHILE, BETTER KNOWN...
...AS THE TOYMAN. AT THIS REPORTING...
...HIS WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN.
THOSE POOR PARENTS...
EXCUSE ME?
THE MOTHERS AND THE FATHERS. THE ONES WHO LOST THEIR CHILDREN. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW THEY MUST FEEL.
AND HOW'S THAT?
HOPELESS?
YOU IMAGINE YOU CAN IMAGINE, BUT HONEY?
YOU CAN'T.
YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M BEING PRESUMPTUOUS.
NO, YOU IMAGINE YOU IMAGINE YOU ARE.
B-DRING B-DRING
LIKE A HOUSE OF CARDS COLLAPSING, ONE BY ONE, THE PIECES FALL INTO PLACE...


...AND I'M LEFT WITH A LIFETIME IN MY HANDS, UNFULFILLED.
THE "SELLING OF A HERO," MR. KENT?...
...MORE LIKELY, THE "SELLING-OUT" OF ONE.
SASHA FEDEROV AND HIS WIFE WERE DROPPING THEIR CHILDREN AT DAYCARE THIS MORNING WHEN THE EXPLOSION OCCURRED...
THE ENTIRE FAMILY IS DEAD.
MONA, PLEASE MAKE THE ARRANGEMENTS.
I'LL GET ON IT--
--NOW.
I HAVE TO FIND THE TOYMAN...
YES, YOU WILL.
BUT THAT HAS TO WAIT.
WHAT MONA WAS SAYING...
HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?
LIKE BECAUSE OF MY ABILITIES, I'M LESS THAN A WOMAN.
HOPE...

YOU ARE NOT A WOMAN...
YOU ARE SOMETHING MORE.
I LOVE YOU.
CONTINUED